[For information pertaining to literary devices and conventions, abbreviations and explanations of numerations used by the author, see 6: Spate AW1 India, category 116, pp. xxi-xxiii, and xxv.]

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

114 question the natives about their customs and beliefs and understand their answers. I was therefore regretfully compelled to give up the idea of making a study of the people of the Little Andaman, and devoted the remainder of my time to the study of the tribes of the Great Andaman, particularly those of the North Andaman among whom Mr Man had not worked. I kept one boy from the Little Andaman with me for some months in the hope that he would learn sufficient Hindustani to act as an interpreter and so enable any future investigator to begin work with the great advantage that I had lacked.

124 [191] In my work amongst the natives of the Great Andaman I at first made use of Hindustani, which the younger men and women all speak more or less imperfectly, and gradually acquired a knowledge of the dialects of the North Andaman. Towards the end of my stay in the islands I was able to obtain the services as interpreter of a man of the *Akar-Bale* tribe who spoke English well and was of considerable intelligence. He is shown in the photographs of Plates V and XIII. With his help I was able to do some work with the *Akar-Bale* and *A-Pučikwar* tribes, and I found that with such an interpreter I was able to obtain much fuller and more reliable results than I could by using my own knowledge of the native language supplemented by Hindustani. If I had had his services from the outset my work would have been much easier and more thorough.

●128 The results of my researches on the physical anthropology of the Andaman Islanders have not been published. I hoped to be able to obtain the services of some one more competent in such matters than myself to assist or direct me in the measurement and study off the collection of skulls and skeletons that I brought to England and that is now in the Anthropological Museum at Cambridge. In this I was disappointed, and absence from England hass prevented me from completing my work in this branch of research.

The languages of the Andaman Islands are chiefly of interest as affording material for the study of comparative grammar and

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

the psychology of language. I had hoped to be able to make some use of the large mass of linguistic material collected by Mr E. H. Man and arranged by Sir Richard Temple, which the latter was so kind as to permit me to examine. Mr Man, however, expressed the intention of publishing that material himself. Therefore, rather than delay longer, I began the publication of my own linguistic studies in a series of papers in the journal *Anthropos*, of which, however, only the first had appeared when the outbreak of war interrupted them[1]. I cannot say when the publication of these notes will be resumed.

Chapters V and VI of the present work contain an attempt at an interpretation of the Andamanese customs and beliefs, which I regard as the most important and hope will be the most valuable part of the book. It is some years since they were written and although they have undergone some revision they now seem to me so inadequately to express my thought that I could wish to rewrite them entirely. At the time they were written (1910) they exhibited an attempt to develop a new method in the interpretation of the institutions of a primitive people. That method will not perhaps seem so novel now as it would have done then. However, I hope that the two chapters will still have value as an example of the method which I believe to be fundamental in the science that has lately come to be known as social anthropology[2].

Of the many imperfections of the book I am, I think, only too well aware. It is indeed an apprentice work, for it was through my work in the Andamans that I really learnt anthropology. However good may be his preliminary training (and mine under Drs Haddon, Rivers and Duckworth at Cambridge

[1] "Notes on the Languages of the Andaman Islands," by A. R. Brown, *Anthropos*, Vol. IX, 1914, pp. 36—52 with map. This paper contains notes on I, The Relations of the Andamanese Languages, and II, The Formation of Words in the Language of the Little Andaman.

[2] I hope to be able to publish shortly the first volume of a work in which the same method is applied to the interpretation of the social institutions of the natives of Australia.

1: Radcliffe-Brown E-5 (1906-1908)1922
AZ2 Andamans AZ2

CHAPTER II

CEREMONIAL CUSTOMS

•128 IN such a society as that of the Andaman Islanders it is possible to distinguish three different ways in which the actions of individuals are regulated or determined by the society. There are, first of all, what we may distinguish as "moral customs," whereby the actions of individuals in relation to one another are regulated on principles of right and wrong conduct. It was with customs of this kind that we were concerned in the last chapter. Secondly, the activities by which the natives obtain their food and make the various objects of which they have need are determined by tradition. Such activities are purely utilitarian and they are regulated, not by commandments similar to those of the moral law, but by accumulated technical knowledge as to the means by which a particular object may be attained. These we may speak of as the "technical customs" of the society.

There are customs of a third kind which are distinguishable both from moral customs and from technical customs. For example, when a man dies, his near relatives observe certain mourning customs, such as covering their bodies with clay. Such customs are distinguished from technical customs by having no utilitarian purpose. They are distinguished from moral customs by this, that they are not immediately concerned with the effects of the action of one person upon another.

It is difficult to find a satisfactory name for all the customs of this kind. A large number of them may be spoken of as "ceremonial customs," and it is this that explains the title of the present chapter.

[p. 88]

2:Man G-5 (1869-1880)1932 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

owing to a variety of circumstances, not the least of which was the absence of any system of representing the sounds in the language—each author having chosen to employ a phonetic code best understood by himself and capable of varying interpretation by others—the result has been, to say the least, unsatisfactory, and the words for the most part are, in their printed form, either wholly unrecognisable by the people themselves, or possess a meaning differing very much from that given.

2. I do not make these remarks with a view of depreciating the efforts of others, for I fully recognise the difficulties with which they had to contend, and am aware that these exceeded any I have had to overcome, consequent on the improved relations which have subsisted between ourselves and the aborigines in recent years.

3. It must also be borne in mind that time necessarily works vast changes in all savage languages, which depend so entirely upon the oral correctness of the whole population for their accurate transmission.

4. As my knowledge of the other dialects is not as yet sufficient for me to be able to describe them comparatively at any length—leisure having failed me to obtain more than a few hundred words of five of the seven remaining tribes of Great Andaman—I wish it to be understood that, except where otherwise stated, my remarks refer to the *.bō·jig-ngī·ji-*, or South Andaman dialect.

5. The Andamanese are, as a rule, very conservative, and prefer to coin from their own resources rather than to borrow from aliens, words expressing ideas or objects which are new to them. To give only one of many examples:—having themselves no forms of worship, they had no word for "prayer," but since seeing the Mahomedans at their daily devotions, and learning that they are addressing an Invisible Being, they express the act by a compound word, *â·rlalik-yâ·b-*, signifying "daily repetition" (viz.: *â·rla-* daily, and *ik-yâ·b-* repetition).

6. They have also a distinct poetical dialect, and in their songs subordinate everything to rhythm, the greatest liberties being thereby taken not only with the forms of their words, but even with the grammatical construction of the sentences. For instance the chorus of one of their songs runs thus:—

chĕklū yâ lak·u mĕj·rà?

which means "who missed the hard (backed) turtle?" the prose construction of the sentence being *mij·a yâ·dī chē·balen lā·kàchī·re?* It will be at once noticed how great is the difference between the two versions, for in this, as in most of their songs,

Blood Groups from the Andaman and Nicobar Islands

By

S. S. Sarkar

The following blood group data were collected during the months of February-April, 1948 in the course of a visit to Little Andaman, Long Island and Car Nicobar by a party under Dr B. S. Guha from the Department of Anthropology, of which the present writer was a member. The data grouped according to the different tribes are as follows :—

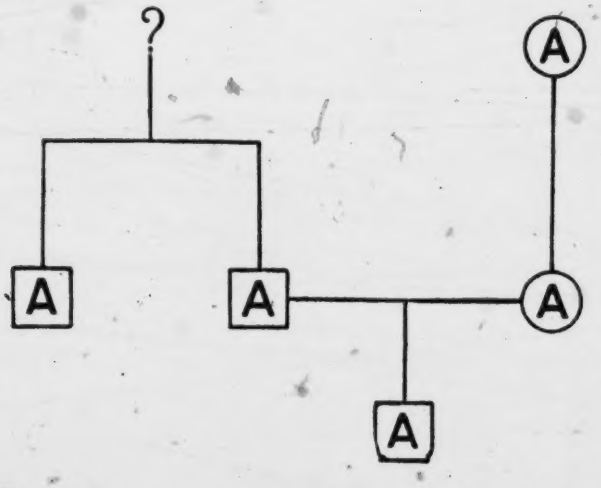
Onges

34 Onges, 19 males and 15 females, were grouped from the island of Little Andaman. They were collected from the settlements round about Bumila Creek, Dugong Creek and the village Tambebui on the N. E. part of the island. The blood group distribution is as follows :—

O	5	14·71%
A	23	67·65%
B	2	5·88%
AB	4	11·76%
	34	

The predominance of group A was already noticeable from Chaudhuri's (Gates, 1940) earlier study of 5 Onges, 3 of whom belonged to A and 1 each to Group O and B.

This will be also apparent from the following pedigree, where three generations show only A.



6: Cipriani E-5 (1951-1953)1961 AZ2 Andamans AZ2
Onge

torches for hunting by night. There were pigs everywhere. In half an hour we often got six or more of them. At Chemalê, far from the coast, we had eleven in a few minutes for distribution to everybody, including roaming Onge. Pigeons and ducks also were often plentiful. The simple pleasures of hunting incited everyone to a spontaneous daily struggle through the dense forest; and so, every month, I managed to carry out many times the work I could have done had I not kept all the men glad to follow me. On seven different occasions I spent 162 days in Little Andaman, out of a total of 634 days altogether in the Andamanese Archipelago – all of them given up to Onge research. These trips are recorded in Port Blair Government offices. A few details on the subject are published in the "Bulletin of the Department of Anthropology", Government of India, starting in Vol. II, No. 1, 1953 (issued in 1956) and extended to other issues. Such papers were hurriedly prepared by me while I was halting in Calcutta on my way from the Andamans to Europe. Press proofs could never be submitted to me; there are, consequently, many misprints, particularly in the figures relating to my Onge Census. The misprints are so obvious that they could only influence a most biased critic: to be discussed in future papers and while my Onge book is in preparation. In Port Blair (South Andaman) I started an Onge Museum with material collected by me. I had the honour of inaugurating it on 6 July, 1953 in the presence of the Chief Commissioner for Andamans and Nicobars, Mr. A. K. Ghosh, one of the kindest and most intelligent Indian gentlemen that it was my pleasure to meet in Asia. On 9 March, 1954 Dr. RAJENDRA PRASAD, President of the Republic of India, also visited the Museum. On that occasion I introduced to him 30 of my Onge friends (wives, husbands and children) in their most natural attire. The President questioned me at length on Onge anthropology and ethnology with the pertinence of a specialist.

While in Little Andaman I tried to study all possible aspects of Onge life. I also tried to count the natives: a very difficult task for they are a nomadic people, ready to vanish into the jungle at any moment. Often I was surrounded by them without seeing a single one. In the darkness of their jungle, the small, black, naked Onge easily disappear. They see us but we do not see them. They can only be counted in their sleeping quarters in communal huts; even so, results are misleading. I found a number of communal huts in the interior regions of Little Andaman, whereas previously they were said to exist only on the coast. The larger, more solidly built huts are in the forest. With the help of my Indian assistants I obtained plans and photographs of all the huts that I saw. Unfortunately the number of Onge communal huts is rapidly diminishing – a very significant fact. Many are in ruins, many more completely destroyed. Only kitchen-middens and occasional clusters of planted bamboo indicate their former location. Through an interpreter, and with two Onge speaking a little Hindi, I was able to gather information on these and other matters. Direct observation, however, proved the best way of gaining knowledge. In some places there was nothing to help me, and I was compelled to guess about communal huts whose inmates chose to hide in the jungle. Of the many personal names that I collected I must say that they are reliable only for a short period: the Onge like to change their names from time to time. All this, in addition to the Onge's nomadic way of life, causes great confusion and makes a proper Census almost impossible. Frequent changing of names also hinders the establishment of genealogies. Furthermore, the Onge custom of adopting children shifts many of them from one family to another, and adoptive parents invariably claim them as their own offspring. The parents themselves, who are ignorant of numbers, not infrequently forget how many children they have, who these children are and where they are located. It was almost useless to follow previous information concerning communal huts; and so I decided to consider mainly the situation existing at the time of my visits. The result of my Census may be imperfect, but before criticizing it it would be advisable to know the conditions that prevail in anthropological work among the Onge. Something more than merely counting people, anyhow, was achieved by me in Little Andaman.

In this short paper I am pleased to present a peculiar aspect of Onge life, an aspect that these innocent and once hostile people did not attempt to hide from me, though they also told me nothing about it. Only direct observation could help, and it involved pro-

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

[Introductory, P. iv]
[Introductory, P. iii, is blank]

PREFACE

The dearth of literature but considerable curiosity about the islands because of the presence of the aborigines, the development of the penal colony and in recent years the colonisation of the refugees, have inspired the author to write a geographical treatise of these islands covering almost all their physical and socio-economic aspects. The interest of the author about these islands of course dates back to some 8 or 9 years for preparing a thesis about these islands as a part fulfilment of his M. Sc. course and the author with the limited time and money made some personal enquiries for the collection of data and the assessment of the situation. The access to the data and the other research materials and the visits to the different parts of the islands were possible through the kind permission and help of the-then Chief Commissioner Sri S. N. Maitra, the Forest Officers, the Head Master of Port Blair High School. Dr. L. Cipriani besides a host of other officers and friends in the islands and also at Calcutta. However the ultimate preparation of the thesis became possible for the kind guidance of Dr. S. P. Chatterjee, Head of the Dept of Geography, Calcutta University.

Anybody faces a tremendous problem in conducting a thorough survey of the islands arising out of the poor communication facilities both on land and water, and more so on account of the very few literatures on the islands. The author cannot demand a thorough enquiry in all parts of the islands and his analysis of the different aspects has been derived more from the conclusions of sample survey.

Though a long time has elapsed since the preparation of the thesis in the year 1955, the author has been, on the whole, eager to incorporate all the latest informations of the islands. The present book is partially a reproduction of his previous thesis with some additional facts and informations and the objective of such changes has been to prepare a comprehensive geographical treatise rather than focussing one particular aspect as was done in the thesis i.e. the colonisation problems of the islands. Besides this, additional chapters on the aboriginal population, the overall assessment and also a geographical account on the Nicobar Islands have been added. The Nicobar Islands, though form only a sidelight of the book, also command a separate geographical treat-

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

[Introductory, P. V]

● 128 ment because of the altogether different character of the islands. In spite of such a distinctness in the geographic personality of the Nicobar Islands, only an introducing chapter has been given.

Never the islands with an area of 2508 square miles and with no fabulous wealth can be a land of Aladin's Lamp but the multiplicity of interest of the islands make them extremely interesting.

The book is published with the idea of providing a reference on all aspects of the islands, not only for the general readers but also for the research workers. If this book serves a little in removing the dismal obscurities of the islands by way of serving as a ready reference of the islands, the author will no doubt feel complacent.

Academic help and advice have been obtained from a large number of persons. For the preparation of the study on the aboriginal population, the author owes his debt of gratitude to Professor Nirmal Kumar Bose and Dr. S. S. Sarkar who have so kindly rendered their valuable help and guidance in this connection. Many of the photographs have so kindly been given by A. S. I. for incorporation within the book. The help, co-operation and suggestions have been derived from such a large number of persons that the author owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to all of them. Last but not the least, the author extends his sincere thanks to Sri G. R. Bhattacharyya for undertaking the pains of this arduous task of publication which has been continuing for a fairly long time.

PROBHAT KUMAR SEN

10: Sen K-3, 4 (ca. 1955) 1962 AZ2 Andamans AZ2

The formation of the penal colony in the islands brought in a number of convicts from time to time to serve death sentence or life sentence because of the political or criminal offence and majority of the convicts had ultimately settled in the islands and at present they have got mixed up irrespective of the caste, creed and religion with a fair degree of homogeneity. They are known as Andaman Indians. Besides these Andaman Indians, the groups of Karens and Burmans constitute a very small percentage of the Burmese population in the islands who foster their indigenous traditions. The need for land for the rehabilitation of the refugees in India due to the partition has made from for the settlement of some refugees in the islands. As the settlement programme of these refugees and also of some people from South India demanded the search for suitable land for colonization of the people, a number of delegations had explored the possibilities. The islands with the extreme smallness in size can hardly make room for the lakhs of refugees but the limited settlement that has been established has definitely provided some of the unfortunates with a small plot of land to live on. This idea of colonization is unique in the settlement history of the islands as we do not find in the earlier periods such an attempt for permanent colonization except by some people from Burma. So long, the permanent settlements grew out of the settlement of the free convicts and in most cases under compulsion. The settlement of the later settlers was so long confined within the South Andaman only and especially around Port Blair. But this colonization scheme which has started operating since March, 1949 is throwing open the different parts of the islands for permanent settlement.

As the aboriginal population and the later settlers are the determinants of the dynamism of the islands, three separate chapters are added. The first chapter is devoted to the study of the aboriginal population and the other ones, to that of the later settlers and new settlers.

[The two chapters on the later settlers and the new settlers haven't been processed. -Analyst]